



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Glacier Bay News Release

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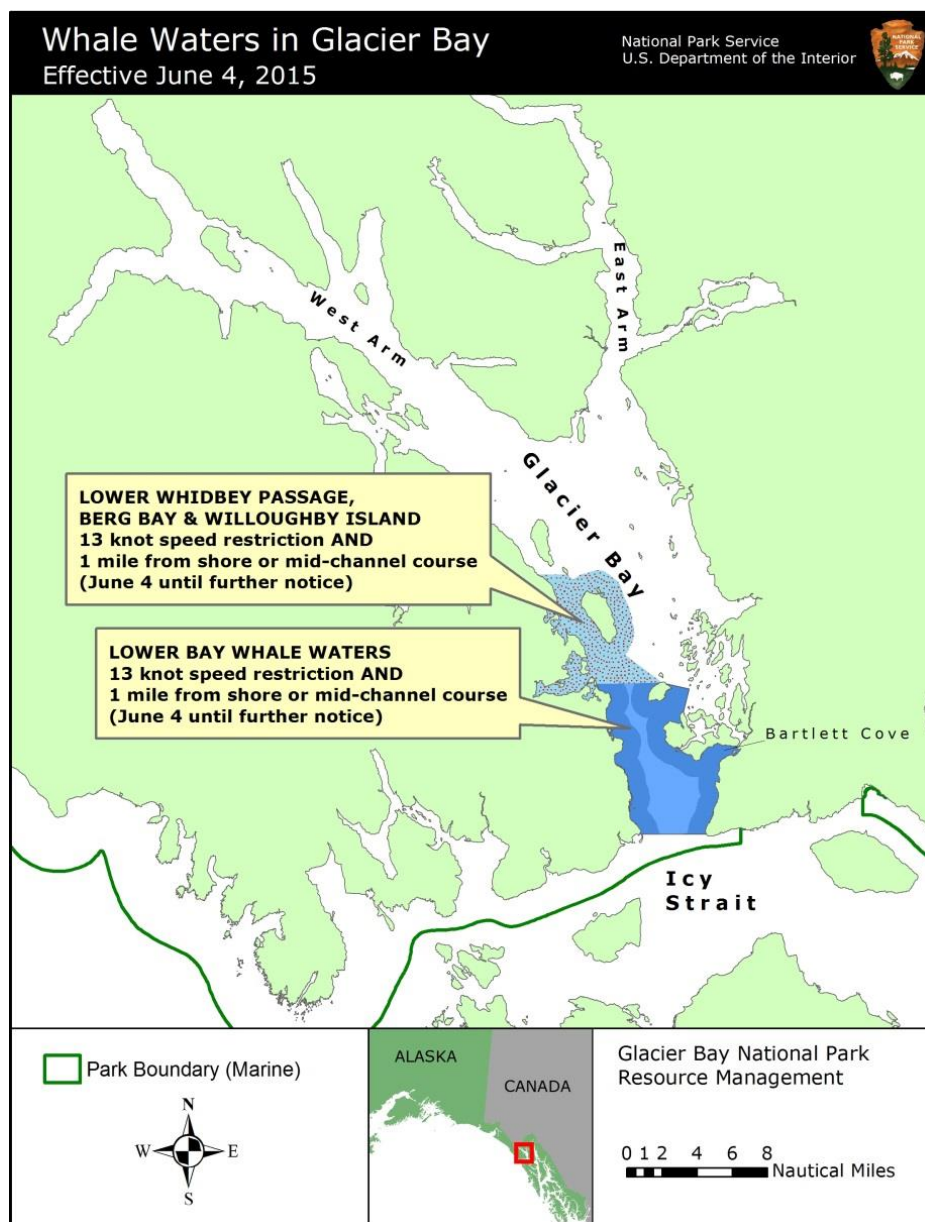
Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective June 4, 2015

BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Acting Superintendent Sheri Barry announced today that a vessel speed limit of 13 knots through the water will be implemented in lower Glacier Bay, lower Whidbey Passage, Fingers Bay, Berg Bay and around Willoughby Island to protect humpback whales. During the past week, at least 23 different humpback whales have been observed feeding in this area. This speed restriction will apply to all vessels from 5 AM Thursday June 4 until further notice. In addition, in all of these areas, vessels greater than 18 feet in length are restricted to a mid-channel course or 1 nautical mile offshore.

As shown on the attached map of current whale waters, the 13 knot speed limit and vessel course restriction are designated in the following areas:

- *Lower Glacier Bay:* This area includes the waters extending from the mouth of Glacier Bay to a line drawn between the northern tip of Strawberry Island and the northern tip of Lars Island. This boundary is shown on NOAA nautical charts of Glacier Bay.
- *Lower Whidbey Passage:* This area is bounded on the north by an imaginary line drawn from the southern tip of Francis Island due west to the mainland, and is bounded on the southeast by an imaginary line drawn from the southern tip of Willoughby Island to the northern tip of Strawberry Island. The southern boundary of this area is contiguous with the northern boundary of Lower Glacier Bay whale waters.
- *Fingers Bay*
- *Berg Bay*
- *Willoughby Island:*
-Including all waters within 1 nautical mile of Willoughby Island.

Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Vessels are prohibited from operating within $\frac{1}{4}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale in Park waters, including those Park waters outside Glacier Bay proper. In addition, vessel operators positioned within $\frac{1}{2}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale are prohibited from altering their course or speed in a manner that results in decreasing the distance between the whale and the vessel. Speed and course restrictions in whale waters are intended to reduce the disruption of feeding humpback whales and to lower the risk of whale/vessel collisions, as authorized by Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart N, 13.1174.



Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907) 697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine VHF radio.